DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 422 090 PS 026 765

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TITLE Improving Behavior through Social Skills Instruction.
PUB DATE 1998-05-00
NOTE 76p.; Action Research Project, Saint Xavier University and IRI/Skylight Field-Based Masters Program.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses (040) -- Reports - Evaluative (142) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Behavior Problems; Change Strategies; Childrens Literature; *Classroom Environment; Curriculum Development; Educational Research; Elementary Education; Elementary School Curriculum; *Elementary School Students; *Interpersonal Competence; *Prosocial Behavior; Social Attitudes; Student Behavior

ABSTRACT

This action research project implemented and evaluated an intervention designed to assist students in developing their social skills to enhance the classroom atmosphere. The targeted population consisted of fourth-, fifth- and sixth- grade students in lower- to middle-class suburbs of a Midwestern city. Off-task, verbal and physical inappropriate behaviors were documented weekly by means of teacher observation checklists and comments, student surveys, and student journals. Analysis of this data revealed that increased class size, student mobility, teacher training, and a failure to teach students moral and social skills may contribute to inappropriate student behaviors. Working parents, negative media influence, and unmet basic needs may also be contributing factors. Three major interventions were selected and implemented: direct instruction of social skills, introduction of character development analysis through literature, and cooperative learning implemented into the existing curriculum. Post-intervention data indicated an immediate, but short term, positive change in student behavior inside the classroom. However, there was no long term measurable transfer of positive student behavior outside of the classroom environment. (Six appendices include the behavior checklist, sample student behavior journal entries, student attitude and student interest surveys, a list of suggested children's literature for teaching socially appropriate values, and a behavior checklist raw date by site. Contains 21 references.) (JPB)

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IMPROVING BEHAVIOR THROUGH SOCIAL SKILLS INSTRUCTION

ED 422 090

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An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

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Field-Based Masters Program

Elgin, Illinois

May, 1998

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ABSTRACT

This program describes an intervention designed to assist students in developing their social skills to enhance the classroom atmosphere. The targeted population consisted of fourth, fifth and sixth grade students from multi-cultural backgrounds, in lower to middle class socio-economic communities in the Northwest suburbs of a large metropolitan area. The off-task, verbal and physical inappropriate behaviors were documented weekly through teacher observation checklists and comments, student surveys, and student journals.

Analysis of the probable cause data revealed that increased class size, mobility, teacher training, and students not taught moral and social skills, may be contributing factors. The review and analysis of literature showed that working parents, poverty, negative media influence, and basic needs not being met are also some of the probable causes.

Solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others combined with an analysis of the problem setting resulted in the selection of three major interventions; direct instruction of social skills, analyzing character development through literature, and cooperative learning implemented into the existing curriculum.

Post intervention data indicated an immediate, yet short term, positive change in student behavior inside the classroom. However, there was no long term measurable transfer of positive student behavior outside of the classroom environment.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of Problem

The students of the targeted fourth, fifth, and sixth grades exhibit inappropriate behavior which interferes with the classroom atmosphere. Evidence for the existence of the problem includes student journals that reflect their feelings, and teacher observation checklists and comments.

Immediate Problem Context

This study will be conducted at three different elementary schools which have similar student populations and instructional settings. Site A and Site B have nearly identical data concerning the student make up. The student population served by these schools is both ethnically and economically diverse.

A little over half of the population of Site A (58 %) and Site B (53 %) is Caucasian, with the largest minority group being Mexican-American. Asian-American, African-American, and Native-American encompass the remainder of the student population. Nearly one quarter of the population is Limited-English-Proficient. Both of these schools are bi-lingual centers.

A little over half the population of Site C (55 %) is Caucasian, with the largest minority group being black (24 %). Asian-American and Hispanic encompass the remainder of the student population.

The socioeconomic status of Site A and Site B range from middle class to low income students. Over one fourth of Site A (35.9 %) and Site B's (32.1 %) population qualify as low income.

The socioeconomic status of Site C also ranges from middle class to low income students. However, slightly less than one half (49 %) of the student population qualify as low income.

The staff at all three sites consist of one principal, kindergarten through sixth grade regular classroom teachers, chapter I resource teacher, behavior disorder teacher (Site C only), Spanish liaison (Sites A & B only), learning disabilities teacher, school psychologist, and a Drug Awareness Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) officer. Art, music, physical education, speech and language, nurse and social worker serve the schools on an itinerant basis.

The average attendance rate (96.3 %) for all three of the sites is above the district (95.1 %) and state (93.5 %) averages. Unfortunately, the school mobility rate is alarmingly high for Site A (37.5 %), Site B (33.2 %), and Site C (26 %). This is even higher than that of the district (24 %) average.

Site A was built in 1933 and is 65 years old. It is set up in a traditional, self-contained classroom style. The building has five different levels because of all of the renovations that it has had. Site A is currently under construction. A mobile is used as a temporary classroom to accommodate the growth. A new building is being constructed in the parking lot of the old building. In the summer of 1998, the old building will be torn down. The noise of this construction is extremely loud.

Site B was built in 1975 and is 27 years old. The building was constructed in an open classroom, circular layout. The original building had no walls to separate the classrooms. Currently, there are temporary walls that

separate the classrooms. However, the front and back of all of the classrooms remain open.

Site C was built in 1950 and is 47 years old. This building has a traditional two-story classroom layout. It has doubled in size from the original building that was constructed. There are two mobiles that are used as temporary classrooms to accommodate the growth. The building is also under construction. A new gymnasium and two classrooms will be added in the fall of 1998.

The Surrounding Community

All three of the aforementioned elementary schools are part of the same unit district located in a northwestern suburb of a major city. This school district is among one of the largest districts in Illinois. There are 4 high schools, 7 middle schools, 37 elementary schools, and 1 alternative high school in the district. Currently, the district is renovating several schools to keep up with the growing population.

The district does not have a favorable history of passing school referendums. Labor relations have been a concern for many years. There have been eight strikes in the last 24 years. However, school and community relations have been on the uprise. In the 1995-1996 school year, a referendum was passed. As a result, the district set the teacher hire record by hiring 189 new teachers.

The community economic status varies from low-income to upper-middle class. One fourth of the community is considered low-income. Low-income is defined as families receiving public aid, living in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, being supported in foster homes with public funds, or eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches. Community housing consists of public housing, apartments, townhouses and single-family homes. The majority

of the district is blue-collar working class. A small population is middle to upper-middle class.

Not only is the district economically diverse, it is also racially diverse. The majority of the population is white. The second predominant race is Hispanic. The remaining population consists of Black, Asian, and Pacific Islanders. This school district takes pride in their ethnicity. Funding is allocated for the busing of students so that each school is racially diverse. To achieve this balance, school boundaries are always being redistricted. This has caused tension between many of the social classes.

In May of 1997, an elementary student from this district was abducted. The community banded together for weeks to search for this little girl. The girl was eventually found murdered in a river. This had a great impact on the community. The parents and schools worked together harmoniously.

National Context of Problem

Our world is rapidly changing and the issues that our children will be experiencing will require good social skills for today as well as the future. "Children are buffeted by the effects of major social problems, such as poverty, hunger and poor nutrition, drug and alcohol abuse, broken homes, and abuse and neglect, and language barriers" (Edwards, 1996, p. 56). As a result of these changes, our society must equip our teachers with the knowledge and ability to educate students who are likely to come from impoverished backgrounds.

All of these factors have an impact on students' behavior, academic performance, self-esteem, peer relationships, and the classroom environment. Children are bringing their problems from their home environment to their school environment because they do not have the skills necessary to cope with them on their own. Therefore, according to Lickona (1991), students are

displaying disruptive behavior such as: violence, vandalism, stealing, cheating, disrespect for authority, peer cruelty, bigotry, bad language, sexual precocity and abuse, increasing self-centeredness, declining civic responsibility, and self destructive behavior. These issues need to be addressed in order for the students to successfully accomplish their academic goals.

Parental involvement in a student's education is lessened due to our changing society. According to the study by Benson, Balbraith, and Espeland, (1995) "only twenty-six percent of the youth surveyed have parents who are involved in helping young people succeed in school. They talk with their kids about school, sometimes assist with schoolwork, and attend school events" (p. 37). This may be due, in part to the fact that our society has gradually accepted women in the workplace. No longer is the nuclear family the norm for today's children. "In the United States, fewer than one in three families can be described as "traditional nuclear families." The number of working women, the mobility of the corporate family, the single-parent household, and blended families created from remarriages continue to increase in number each year" (Fogarty & Bellanca, 1992, p. 13). Unfortunately, there is no longer someone home to help monitor or assist with students homework.

> As all teachers know, aggressive and disruptive behavior in the classroom often leads to poor school performance and destructive peer relationships, which in turn contribute to the trajectory toward violence. (Sautter, 1995, p. K8)

Many children are turning to gangs to find acceptance in which they are longing. These students have not been taught proper social skills or values to feel adequate self worth. They do not possess the skills necessary to interact with their peers or adults. One socially inadequate student can affect the tone of

the entire classroom environment. It has become an epidemic because several students are bringing the effects of these issues into the classroom.

Educators agree that many students are not equipped with the social skills necessary for them to form successful relationships. Many of today's students do not have the discipline or internal motivation to excel academically. According to Edwards (1996), two things must occur so that the child will learn the proper social skills. First, teachers must be required to learn first hand of the problems students face. In an upstate New York college, students are required to complete 40 hours of various experiences such as: an unemployment office, battered women's center, health clinic, rape crisis center, legal aid or welfare office. In addition, teachers should be sufficiently trained to teach the social skills in a positive environment.

Secondly, the students need to be taught these skills so that they may transfer them into adulthood. According to Gerzon (1997), these skills must be taught to the students through real life controversial issues. These issues must be facilitated in the classroom to promote positive interaction among the students. Students will learn social skills by exploring the real life issues in the classroom.

This problem of poor social skills has been an area of major concern for the past ten years. Yet, there has been little attempt to educate the teacher, parent, or child on how to address these issues. Borba (1989) summed up the need for reform in the classroom by saying, "kids and teachers both need to expand their self-esteem, increase their interpersonal communication skills, and learn the affective and behavioral skill's necessary for creating success in all areas of their lives" (p. xi).

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM EVIDENCE AND PROBABLE CAUSES

Problem Evidence

In order to document the extent of inappropriate behavior displayed by the students, behavior checklists, student attitude surveys, and behavior journals were monitored over a four week time period.

During the first four weeks of the intervention, each site recorded inappropriate behaviors using a behavior checklist (see Appendix A). The behaviors were monitored once a week on the same day over the course of the entire day. The behavior checklist monitored the students for the following behaviors: talking during instruction, shouting out without raising hand, out of seat without permission, playing in desk or with other objects, inappropriate language, making fun of others, inappropriate gestures, physical contact, threatening or intimidation, and negative attitudes. A tally mark was checked by the researcher or teacher assistant each time one of the specific behaviors was displayed by anyone in the class.

The data from the behavior checklists were tallied at the end of each day and averaged for all three sites. During the four weeks of the behavior documentation, the data showed that there was a common link (see Table 1) found at the three sites.

Table 1

Behavior Checklist-Average over Four Week Period

Targeted Behaviors	Average Number of Incidents
Talking w/others	23
Shouting out	38
Out of seat	13
Playing in desk	6
Inappropriate language	1
Making fun of others	2
Inappropriate gestures	0
Physical contact	1
Threatening	0
Negative attitude	8

There were three major problem areas exhibited by the students the most. These areas are: talking with others during instruction, shouting out without raising hand and getting out of one's seat without permission. There were other areas that the students did exhibit some inappropriate behavior. These areas were playing with objects in desk, inappropriate language, making fun of others, negative attitude, and physical contact. The areas where no inappropriate behavior was displayed were inappropriate gestures and threatening or intimidation.

In addition to tallying inappropriate behaviors, students recorded their thoughts and feelings regarding the classroom in a journal (see Appendix B). All students journaled once a week. Students were given a prompt each time they recorded in their journal. The prompts reflected the weekly themes and activities

in class. The journals reflected that there were two common concerns among the students. The two concerns were the way the students treated each other and disruptive behavior in the classroom.

According to the journals, students expressed that they felt bad when people picked on each other. The students did not think it was fair to make fun of people for things that are out of their control. They were aware that some students do not follow the classroom rules and found this behavior to be distracting and disruptive. Many students said they could not concentrate because so many people were talking or goofing around.

The feelings the students expressed in their journals validated that inappropriate behavior does interfere with the learning environment and climate of the classroom. Students are distractive, verbally abusive and physically abusive. This infringes on the rights of others to learn. There are several possible causes for these inappropriate behaviors.

Probable Cause: Site Based

Both subjective and objective means were used with the 63 elementary students in this study. This study is meant to document that the lack of social skills and family values cause the off-task behavior in the classroom. Within the first couple of weeks of school, students were given a student attitude survey (see Appendix C) and a student interest survey (see Appendix D). The surveys were administered to discover students' feelings towards school and their peers. The students were directed to answer each question as honestly and as accurately as they could. The students were not required to use their name to assure confidentiality.

Student Attitude Survey

The results from the student attitude survey are in Table 2. The survey was categorized into the following areas: student attitudes toward school, student attitude toward academic performance, student attitude toward their parents involvement in their education, student perception of student behavior, student attitudes toward classroom rules, and student feelings toward classroom environment.

The student attitudes toward school were indicated by questions regarding the importance for them to do well in school, whether or not they work hard to make good choices in school, and if they are happy attending their school. The vast majority have a positive attitude toward school.

Student academic performance was indicated by questions regarding their feelings about class work being interesting, their comfort level in participating in class discussions and how often they pay attention in class to their teacher. The majority of the students had a positive attitude toward academic performance.

Student attitudes toward their parent involvement in their education were indicated by questions regarding if their parents expected them to do well in school, if they could go to their parents for help, and if their parents were interested in what they do in school. Again, the majority of the students had a positive attitude toward their parents involvement.

Student perception of student behavior was indicated by questions regarding if students in their class were well-behaved, how much time was wasted due to disruptive behavior, if their classmates treated them with respect, and if they treated their classmates with respect. Only a minority of the students had a positive perception of classroom behavior.

Student attitudes toward classroom rules were indicated by questions regarding the fairness of classroom rules and the fairness of the consequences of broken rules. Again the majority of the students felt that the rules and consequences were fair.

Lastly, student feelings toward the classroom environment were indicated by questions regarding how safe and secure they felt in the classroom and in the school, and if they felt comfortable asking a classmate or a teacher for help. The majority of the students had a positive feeling about the classroom environment.

Table 2

Student Attitude Survey

	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Never
School				
Important for me to do well	84%	14%	1%	1%
I work hard to make good choices	48%	45%	6%	1%
I like attending this school	68%	23%	4.5%	4.5%
Academics				
I pay attention to the teacher	43%	48%	9%	0%
I participate in class discussions	43%	48%	9%	0%
The work is interesting	17%	42%	39%	2%

Table 2 (continued)

	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Never
Parents				
Willing to help me with my homework	76%	17%	7%	0%
Expect good work	76%	19%	2%	3%
Interested in my school work	65%	23%	11%	1%
Can ask them for help	73%	12%	12%	3%
Behavior				
Well behaved classmates	4%	41%	55%	0%
Time is wasted for behavior	1%	22%	72%	5%
Students are well behaved	3%	42%	55%	0%
Wasted time on behavior	1%	22%	72%	5%
Rules				
Rules are fair	54%	38%	6%	2%
Consequences are fair	46%	40%	14%	0%
Environment				
My classmates treat me respectfully	23%	47%	27%	3%
I treat my classmates respectfully	47%	40%	12%	1%

Overall, the majority of the students felt very positively about the school, academic performance, parental involvement, and classroom rules. On the contrary, the majority of the students felt negatively about classroom behavior. Student attitudes could be influenced by their outside interests.

Student Interest Survey

Sixty-three elementary students in grades four, five and six were surveyed. As the data in the figures indicate, the second survey composed of thirteen questions, was categorized into the following areas: family structure, responsibility, and media influence.

Family structure was indicated by questions regarding being home alone, day care involvement, structured homework time, eating with family, eating breakfast, and bedtime on a school night. Results indicate (see Figure 1) that the majority of students have someone to come home to and to eat with. About half of the students have a set time to do homework and eat breakfast. The minority of students go to bed before 9:30 p.m. (see Figure 2).

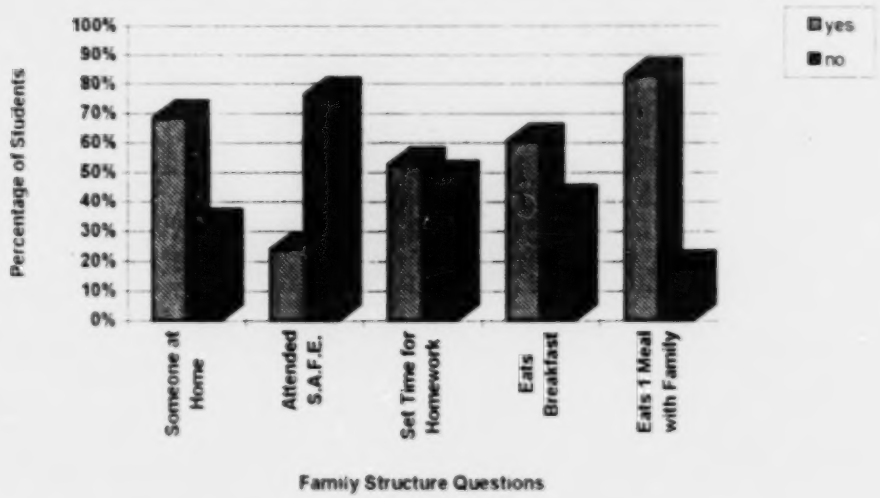

Figure 1. Family Structure questions from Student Interest Survey

Responsibility was indicated by questions regarding whether chores were done at home and consequences for not doing chores (see Table 3). The majority of students have chores at home and the minority of students have consequences for unfinished chores. Students were also asked the number of chores they have at home (see Figure 3).

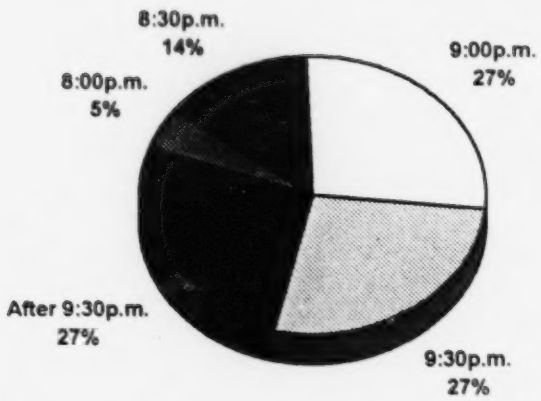

Figure 2. Bed Time on a School Night from Student Interest Survey

Table 3

Student Responsibility

	Yes	No
Students who have chores	90%	10%
Consequences for chores unfinished	57%	43%

Media was indicated by questions regarding the amount of television being watched, types of programs being viewed, having cable television, types of stations being viewed on cable, and rated PG. 13 and R movies. The majority of students watch more than two hours of television a day, shows that are intended for adults, cable television, movie channels, and view movies rated R and PG 13 (see Figures 4 and 5).

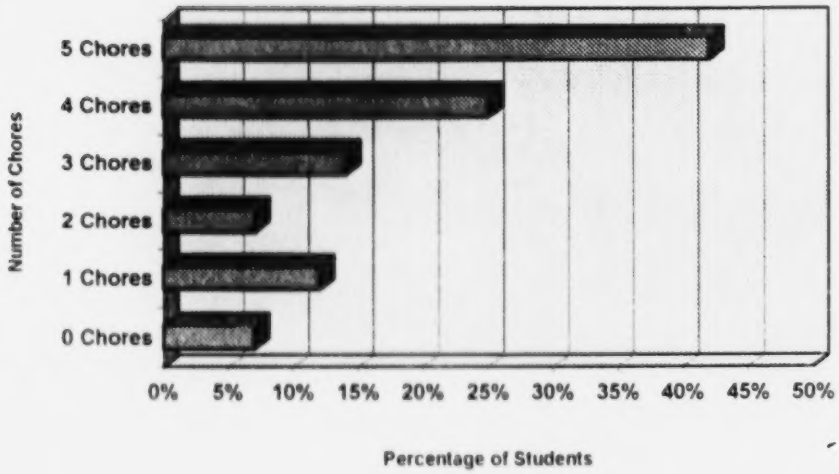

Figure 3. Percentage of Children Who Have Chores from Student Interest Survey

According to the data collected, the targeted children in this survey are influenced daily by television and the media. They are watching shows that are meant for adult entertainment rather than using the television as a tool for education.

The majority of these students are not getting the sleep their bodies need, and only half of them are eating breakfast. Students are not able to make the best choices when their bodies are experiencing sleep and nutrition deprivation.

Lastly, parents are giving their children the responsibility of chores at home, but unfortunately the majority of those students do not have any consequences if their chores remain unfinished. This does not give the child and sense of responsibility or accomplishment. All of these factors contribute to the disruptive behavior displayed by the students in the classroom. Educators have different theories for the causes of these behaviors in today's children.

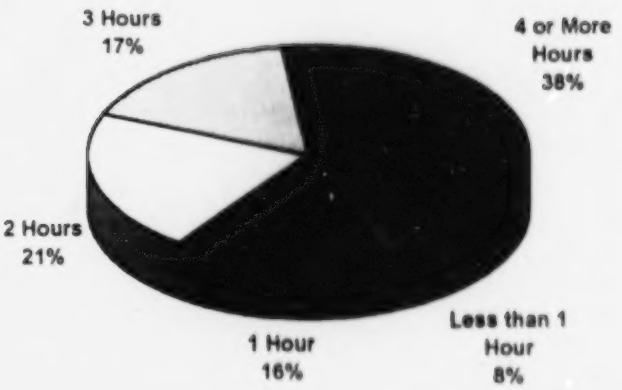

Figure 4. Hours of Television Watched Per Day from Student Interest Survey

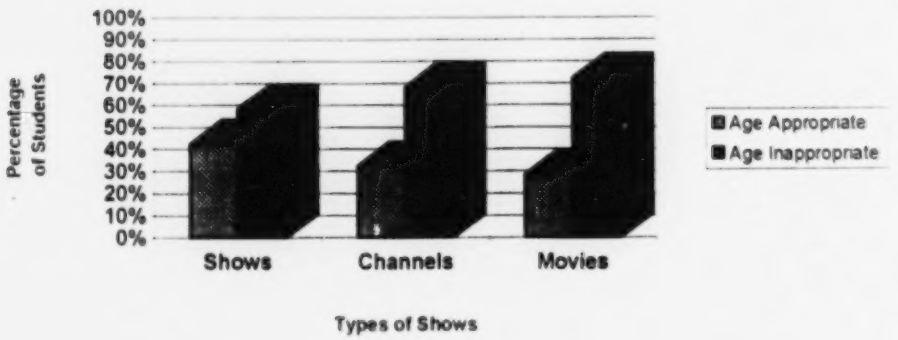

Figure 5. Types of Media Viewed from Student Interest Survey

Probable Causes: Literature Based

In today's society there are varied forms or standards of what social skills are acceptable. Due to the absence of the universal definition, it is difficult to determine which social skills are essential to teach youth in order to be contributing citizens of society. Research indicates that the following social issues: survival needs, violence, media, family structure, and parental role

modeling are the causes that contribute to inappropriate behavior in the classroom.

Unmet Survival Needs

> When families do not meet the basic physical and emotional needs of children, the children are not prepared to function in school mentally or morally. Increasingly children come to school without breakfast, without enough sleep, without their homework done, and without the feeling that anybody really cares about them. (Lickona, 1991, p. 34)

It is alarming how many children lack these basic survival needs. "At present about one in five of all U.S. children and two in five among children age six and under live below the officially defined poverty line "(Garbarino, 1997, p. 15). There are about 22 % of the students in the United States whose basic needs are not being met. It has been proven that it is difficult to concentrate if one is suffering from hunger or malnutrition. "Maybe they are just a few pounds underweight, or a little shorter. It won't show up in physical exams, but even short term undernutrition can cause concentration problems. The kids are going to school, but they are falling behind" (Newsweek, 1994, p. 59). This is not the only physical obstacle students have to cope with. They are often dealing with physical violence on a daily basis too.

Violence

Even though the United States is not at war, it is constantly battling violence in its' own country. There is an increased amount of incidents of violent crimes that are targeted at children. "Every two days, guns kill the equivalent of a class of 25 youngsters and injure 60 more" (Sautter, 1995, p. K2). "Homicide has become the third leading cause of death for children between the ages of five and fourteen" (Sautter, 1995, p. K2). When children are exposed to this type of violence, it has a negative effect on their behavior. They are more

likely to act out in an aggressive manner. Children tend to model the behavior they witness.

> The violence inflicted on our young takes more than a physical toll. The American Psychological Association reports that the post-traumatic stress that children experience as either victims of or witnesses to violence includes intrusive imagery, emotional constriction or avoidance, fears of recurrence, sleep difficulties, disinterest in significant activities, and attention difficulties. (Sautter, 1995, p. K3)

In addition to being subjected to violence in their personal lives, children are also exposed to violence through the media.

Media

The media glamorizes violence which makes society become obsessed with it. Television has become the nation's baby-sitter. According to Lawrence (1994),

> Children sit in front of the tube for an average of 17 hours a week, watching depictions of remorseless murder and mayhem. The average young television viewer will see over 25,000 murders before he or she reaches the age of 18. The greatest impact is on preadolescent children who do not yet have the capacity to separate what is real from what is not. To them television is a report on how the world really works. (p. 11)

Children are growing up with the television as their main source of information and connection to the world. "The typical elementary school child spends 30 hours a week in front of the television set. By age 16, the average child will have witnessed an estimated 200,000 acts of violence and by age 18, approximately 40,000 sexually titillating scenes" (Lickona, 1991, p. 5).

Not only are children being bombarded with violent depictions from the news, they are also exposed to these images and other inappropriate details

from sitcoms. Children are viewing shows that are meant for adults. Shows like "Friends", "Seinfeld", and "90210" that are very popular among school age children have adult themes and situations. Television tends to glamorize teen-age pregnancy, drug abuse, and promiscuous behavior.

These same inappropriate behaviors are being displayed in cartoons. Parents are deceived by these programs because they are animated. Parents assume these shows are safe for their children to view (Lawerence, 1994). On the contrary, they contain many adult situations and acts of violence. Two very popular cartoons are "The Simpsons" and "Beavis and Butthead". "The cartoon characters torture animals, harass girls, sniff paint thinner, and set fires. They commit petty thefts, shoplifting, auto theft and credit card fraud" (Lawrence, 1994, p. 11). All of these acts are portrayed in a humorous manner. In doing so, this detracts from the seriousness of the crime. "The constant repetition of violence and violent imagery desensitizes viewers in the same way a therapist desensitizes a phobia patient: by repeated exposure to what's frightening" (Lawrence, 1994, p. 11). Parents need to take an active role in supervising the television programs their children watch. This may be difficult because of the changing structure of the family.

Family Structure

In today's society, the structure of the traditional family has changed. The nuclear family is no longer the norm. Families today consist of single parents, step parents, teen-age parents, and same sex parents. Even families that have two parents are often required to have both parents work in order to make ends meet. All these changes in families have decreased the time that parents have to spend with their children. "An estimated 6 million children play at home or in the neighborhood after school until their mothers or fathers come home from work. About 15 percent of children six to nine years old do not have a parent

present when they come home" (Hiaasen, 1993, p. 1). Children who are left unsupervised are more likely to get in trouble by using drugs and alcohol and by making bad choices. It has been proven that lack of supervision has a negative effect on a student's academic performance. Even if there is a parent at home, what is more important is that that adult is a positive role model.

Parental Role Modeling

Parents are also no longer teaching or modeling social skills to their children. Many students are lacking a strong moral foundation. When a child is faced with making a moral decision between right and wrong, they do not have this foundation to fall back upon.

> Speaking generally the home cannot be counted on to transmit the love; the three C's of care, concern, and connection; and the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that enable each individual born into this society to become a member of a human culture in the broadest sense of that term. (Martin, 1995, p. 357)

In some instances, educators and peers take on the responsibility of teaching morals and values to these children.

Educators are expected to provide emotional support and instill morals in these children. This leaves teachers with a very challenging and almost impossible task. Teachers and students are also coping with overcrowded classrooms, inadequate facilities and a shortage of supplies. "Kindergarten through Twelfth grade for public schools for the 1995/1996 school year showed a gain of 658,000 students. This is the highest level since 1970" (Smith, 1996, p. 12). If teachers had the proper training in teaching social skills, it would be easier for them to deal with these issues competently. "Teachers who use social skill curriculums are more satisfied with their classes and with teaching in general than are teachers who do not" (Cummings & Haggerty, 1997, p. 28).

Analysis of the probable cause data suggested reasons for the lack of social skills and inappropriate behavior in students. Students lacked the adequate social skills necessary in order to demonstrate appropriate behavior. In addition to this data, the students lacked direct instruction of these social skills in the curriculum.

Research literature suggested the following probable causes: working parents have less time to spend with their children, poverty, negative influence the media has over the children, and student basic needs not being met. Within the school environment, some factors may include increased class size, lack of teacher training, as well as students not directly being taught the moral and social skills. Research also suggests that student behavior may be influenced by home environmental factors. Researchers have various theories regarding possible solutions to these problem areas.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Review of the Literature

Analysis of the literature search for solution strategies suggested that the following programs be addressed in order to improve student behavior and social skills students need in order to succeed in life. "Raising Healthy Children", "Conflict Resolution Education" and "Second Step" are programs that equip children with the proper social skills which enable them to behave appropriately and experience increased positive interaction with other children. All of these programs must be implemented school-wide in order for them to be effective prevention programs.

Raising Healthy Children

The first program, "Raising Healthy Children," has the following components: direct instruction of social skills, analyzing character development through literature, and cooperative discipline through cooperative learning and school, parent, and community partnerships (Cummings & Hagerty, 1997).

Direct instruction. The first component is the direct instruction of social skills. The program, Raising Healthy Children, teaches social skills school wide

with monthly skill steps and activities. This program consists of four major components.

1. Staff development
2. Parenting workshops
3. Home-based services
4. Student activities (Cummings & Haggerty, 1997)

The staff development component consists of five sessions. Each session has a different focus. The first session discusses classroom management. The second session deals with strategies to motivate at-risk learners. The third session focuses on the teaching of social skills. The fourth session explores different teaching strategies for the instruction of social skills. The final session explains how to integrate the teaching of social skills and appropriate behavior through literature.

The second major component of this program is parenting workshops. This aspect of Raising Healthy Children encourages parents to take a more active role in their child's education. The workshops help teach the parents how to react to different conflict bound situations which enables them to reinforce appropriate skills to their children. It also helps parents realize how important it is that they demonstrate or role model the proper skills because of their huge impact on their children.

The third component is home-based services. An outside person, usually a social worker, helps in the family's home for family intervention. The social

worker also invites parents into the school to help them in a one on one situation as well as getting them to participate more in the schools.

The final component in Raising Healthy Children is student activities. The units are designed around particular social skills. Some examples of activities include developing charts of what a certain social skill looks and sounds like, journal writing, role playing, and discussing social issues. "Teachers enhance student motivation to learn social skills, present skills in manageable components, model successful performance of skills, give students opportunities to practice and provide specific feedback and reinforcement" (Cummings & Haggerty, 1997, p. 30). These student activities can be integrated throughout the curriculum, especially in the area of reading.

Analyzing character development. The second intervention is analyzing character development through literature. There are several different series of books that enhance literature analysis. One example is the Get-Alongs series. This set of books help the students explore character feelings. Each book in the set focuses on a different feeling. Also through existing literature, teachers can help students focus on a character's feelings so that they can empathize with that character. For example, many books explore different issues such as : friendships, death, divorce and other social issues (see Appendix E). The teacher helps the students connect to these ideas and transfer them to their daily lives. This is done by simply pointing out both the positive and the negative examples of the social skills portrayed in the novel. This will help the students become more aware of their own behavior and social skills. If students

are more in tune with their behavior, they will be more apt to take responsibility for their behavior.

Cooperative discipline. The third intervention is a management program called cooperative discipline. This program suggests that by identifying student behavior, attending to misbehavior immediately, and providing encouraging statements appropriate student behavior will increase.

In order to maintain a well-managed classroom, teachers can use several strategies. One strategy is the use of cooperative learning where students work collaboratively in their assigned roles. "Cooperative learning approach provides the means for establishing positive collaborative relationships among students and teachers. These relationships are essential building blocks in a community of learners with high-level cognitive goals" (Bellanca & Fogarty, 1997, p. xiv).

The core of cooperative learning is having kids demonstrate the acquired skills by working in structured groups. Students assume varying roles in the group in which they would experience in real life situations. They can actually experience real life situations by having partnerships with community members.

Partnerships. The fourth intervention is school, parent, and community partnerships. These partnerships allow people outside of the school to get involved with the students. This benefits the students because these people touch upon all of the different areas of the child's life. According to Clark (1982), there are five major steps that apply to getting parents involved in their child's school. These steps are:

1. Send home brief, enthusiastic, handwritten notes praising parental efforts.
2. Send home easy assignments parents can do with their children.
3. Encourage interaction with basic activities.
4. Set up appointments with parents.
5. Maintain close communication. (Clarke, 1982, p. 184)

According to Epstein (1995), teachers must create a caring environment action plan in order to get the community involved. These five steps must be followed to obtain community involvement and support:

1. Create an action team
2. Obtain funds and other support
3. Identify starting points
4. Develop a three year plan
5. Continue planning and working (Epstein, 1995, p. 708-709)

Volunteers from within the community can be a schools greatest asset. "Their knowledge and experience, connections with others in the business world, and perspective on the skills needed in today's workplace are a tremendous resource in the classroom" (Smith, 1996, p. 59).

"Research is designed to evaluate whether the integrated, broad-based teaching of social skills and emotional skills reduces children's risk of developing problems in adolescents" (Cummings & Haggerty, 1997, p. 28). The goal of Raising Healthy Children is to provide an intervention that integrates the family, school and community. One research group at the University of Washington is

currently following 1,040 first and second grade students from 10 elementary schools. They will track them until high school to measure the effectiveness of this program. There are several programs like Raising Healthy Children that promote appropriate behavior through teaching social skills such as Conflict Resolution Education.

Conflict Resolution Education

There are four different approaches to implementing the second program, Conflict Resolution Education. The following approaches consist of: process curriculum approach, mediation program approach, peaceable classroom approach, and the peaceable school approach (Crawford & Bodine, 1996).

Process curriculum approach. The first approach, process curriculum approach, designates a certain amount of time to teaching the following: the foundation abilities, principles, and the problem-solving processes of conflict resolution. This program consists of the following four components:

1. Teacher training and community involvement
2. Negotiation curriculums
3. Follow-up opportunities
4. Ongoing curriculum development and innovation. (Crawford & Bodine, 1996, p. 15)

In the first component, teacher training and community involvement, negotiation professionals train teachers and administrators in negotiation techniques. The training focuses on seven basic principles of communication, building relationships, clarifying interests, meeting interests of others, standards

of legitimacy, finding alternatives, and making commitments. After the training, negotiation professionals recruit volunteers from the community to help work with the teachers to implement these ideas in the classroom. The teachers are provided with follow-up meetings and workshops. The negotiation professionals collect feedback from the teachers and trainers to modify existing curriculum to meet their needs. After the teachers are trained, they need to educate the students about the curriculum.

Mediation program approach. The second approach, mediation program approach, teaches individuals how to act as a neutral third party facilitator to help others resolve conflicts. The mediation program consists of six phases to implement peer mediation in a school:

1. Develop the Program Team and Commitment
2. Design and Plan the Program
3. Select and Train the Mediators
4. Educate a Critical Mass
5. Develop and Execute a Promotional Campaign
6. Program Operation and Maintenance (Crawford & Bodine, 1996, p. 28)

To begin this program, a program team must be selected and trained in conflict resolution. A program coordinator builds faculty consensus for the program and assesses their faculty's needs. An advisory committee must be formed to establish a timeline for implementation of the program, develop policies and procedures, and allocate the funding for the program. Next, the

program is introduced to the student population. Peer mediators are selected, trained and recognized. Faculty, parents and students are trained in peer mediation through workshops and meetings. An initial campaign to promote the program is necessary to gain the support of those involved in the program. For this program to be a success, proper maintenance of the program is essential.

Peaceable classroom approach. The third approach, peaceable classroom approach, integrates conflict resolution in the core subjects and into classroom management strategies. There are four parts of this approach.

1. Faculty Create a Cooperative Environment
2. Faculty Teach Students To Be Peacemakers
3. Faculty Implement the Peacemaker Program
4. Faculty Refine and Upgrade the Students' Skills (Crawford & Bodine, 1996, p. 34)

The first step is to teach the students to become peacemakers through training them in these areas: understanding the nature of conflict, choosing an appropriate conflict strategy, negotiating to solve the problem, mediating others' conflicts and formalizing the agreement. (Crawford & Bodine, 1996). When the students have completed the training, the teachers begin the program. The mediators work in pairs, wear peer mediator T-shirts, watch over the playground, and tend to conflicts. Each year the training becomes more complex to upgrade the mediation skills so these skills become a natural reaction to conflict. This approach creates a cooperative classroom which reduces the factors of using violence in the classroom. "Cooperative learning, compared with competitive or

individualistic learning, results in higher academic achievement and increased use of higher level reasoning strategies, more caring and supportive relationships, and greater self-esteem" (Crawford & Bodine, 1996, p. 35). Once the students are trained the teachers can integrate the program into the existing curriculum. After successful implementation in the classroom, it needs to promoted school wide.

Peaceable school approach. The final approach, peaceable school approach is similar to the peaceable classroom approach. Rather than focusing on merely the classroom aspect, it deals with getting the entire school involved with the program. There are six fundamental skills that make up the peaceable school approach. These skills include:

1. Building a Peaceable Climate
2. Understanding Conflict
3. Understanding Peace and Peacemaking
4. Mediation
5. Negotiations
6. Group Problem Solving (Crawford & Bodine, 1996, p. 44)

One of the key parts of this approach is to manage student behavior by getting them to take responsibility for their own behavior, rather than using coercion (Crawford & Bodine, 1996). It is the faculty's role to instill this type of responsibility in their student body. Before students can resolve conflicts effectively, they need to understand the nature of conflict, causes of conflict, possible responses to conflict and its potential benefits. Students are taught

peacemaking behaviors such as: appreciating diversity, understanding perception, empathizing, dealing with emotions, managing anger, countering bias and communicating. Mediation is used to assist conflicts between two people. These two people learn to focus on resolving the conflict rather than their own interests. When conflicts involve a number of students, group problem solving is a strategy that can be used. It is the groups responsibility to come to a consensus decision that will effectively resolve the conflict. Another alternative to dealing with conflict is learning techniques to control anger.

Second Step

The third program, Second Step, teaches prosocial behavior and reduces the levels of aggressive behavior with weekly lessons on empathy training, impulse control, and anger management (Frey, 1993). This program enables the student to develop alternative strategies and identify which behaviors are appropriate in different situations. Student motivation is the key to creating a successful Second Step program. To have an effective program, teachers must include the following four components:

1. Emphasizing self-determination and control
2. Appealing to student concerns about safety
3. Using personally relevant material
4. Enlisting support from older peers and respected adults (Frey, 1993)

Emphasizing self-determination and control. The emphasizing self-determination and control component consists of teaching students to be socially competent and have control over oneself. "Many aggressive youngsters also

competent and have control over oneself. "Many aggressive youngsters also believe that people's actions towards them reflect hostile intentions, posing a threat to perceived control. They often resort to aggression as a means of regaining that control" (Frey, 1993, p. 4). The emphasis on this step is by strengthening the student's self-control.

Appealing to student concerns about safety. The second component of appealing to student concerns about safety, addresses the issue of a student's personal safety (Frey, 1993). Teachers can lay the groundwork in their lessons by communicating a real concern for the student's welfare and a willingness to hear all points of view. Teachers also need to challenge some of these ideas. To do this effectively, teachers should present the information, allow for and assess student reaction, and have students hypothesize why they had those reactions.

Using personally relevant material. The third component of using personally relevant material makes the students more likely to be engaged in sharing (Frey, 1993). Teachers and students share personal anecdotes about themselves. The teacher must set up an environment in which students feel safe to talk about social problems. This can be done by creating a non-judgmental atmosphere. The use of a video camera while students are role-playing various social situations is often a motivator for students.

Enlisting support from older peers and respected adults. The final component of enlisting peer models and respected adults lessens the possibility of student rejection of the program. Older students who present information to

younger students are a great source because it benefits both the younger and the older students. Teachers may also ask respected adults from the community to come in and role-play various situations about anger management and problem solving skills.

The research on the Second Step program was to determine if it leads to a decrease in aggressive behavior and an increase in prosocial behavior among elementary school students. "Prosocial behavior reflects competence in peer interactions and friendships and in interpersonal conflict skills" (Grossman, p. 1605, 1997).

These three programs, Raising Healthy Children, Conflict Resolution Education, and Second Step Violence Prevention, are ways to promote appropriate behavior in the classroom and increase positive interactions among students. Each program involves some type of instruction of social skills followed by hands-on opportunities to practice these skills. All of these programs emphasize that there needs to be training for staff members so that the programs can be implemented school-wide.

Project Objectives and Process Statements

As a result of instruction in social skills during the period of September 1997 to December of 1997, fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students will decrease inappropriate behavior as measured by behavior checklists, student surveys, and student journals.

In order to accomplish this objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Integrate cooperative learning into the existing curriculum.
2. Direct instruction of social skills through modeling and role-playing.
3. Analyzing character development through literature based studies.

Project Action Plan

The action plan was developed to decrease inappropriate behavior in the classroom environment. This plan consists of direct instruction of social skills, analyzing character development in various genres of literature, and implementing cooperative learning into the existing curriculum. The researchers will use behavior checklists and comments, student journals and surveys. The student interest survey will be completed by the first week of school. The student attitude survey will be completed by the third week of school. These surveys will provide information regarding students' home environment and their feelings regarding the classroom environment to determine baseline data.

The intervention will begin September 22, 1997 and will continue through December 19, 1997. The plan consists of introducing a different social skill every other week for 12 weeks. The social skills will be taught three times a week for 40 minutes per session. These social skills will be reinforced through activities using literature cooperative groups.

I. Directing Instruction of Social Skills

A. Targeted Social Skills

1. Basic Manners
   a. Define through discussion using a web
   b. Activities modeling appropriate manners
   c. Role-playing proper manners
   d. Read literature about manners
   e. Make picture book exhibiting the basic manners
   f. Reflection Journal
2. Listening
   a. Define through discussion using T-chart (looks like/sounds like)
   b. Independent activities that require good listening skills
   c. Partner activities that require good listening skills
   d. PMI
3. Complimenting vs. Cut-downs
   a. Define through discussions using T-chart
   b. Make a compliment tree as a class
   c. Journaling about how it feels to be complimented and how it feels to be cut-down
   d. Find examples of complimenting and cut-downs in the media and literature working in cooperative groups
4. Treating Others with Respect
   a. Define through agree/disagree chart
   b. Discussion and writing activities to learn the golden rule
   c. Cooperative group activities using Rights and Responsibilities
   d. Analyzing literature to find responsible/irresponsible characters
   e. Reflection journal describing personal experiences
5. Taking Responsibility for their own Behavior
   a. Define responsibility through a discussion and a web

b. Modeling responsible situations.

c. Role playing responsible situations in cooperative groups.

d. Character analysis and Venn diagram

e. Reflection using Mrs. Potter's questions

6. Anger Management

a. Define through video analysis and discussion.

b. Implement second step series.

c. Self awareness checklist.

d. Playground situation- role playing in cooperative groups.

e. Find alternative solutions in literature.

Methods of Assessment

A variety of data collection methods will be used in order to assess the effects of the intervention. Changes in student attitude toward school and the classroom will be reviewed through the student attitude survey given in September and then again in January. The way students are feeling toward the classroom will be evaluated through student journals. The behavior checklists will measure the occurrence of inappropriate student behavior.

CHAPTER 4

EVALUATION OF RESULTS AND PROCESS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of the intervention addressed the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade student's inadequate knowledge of the appropriate social skills to demonstrate proper behavior. This was evidenced by teacher recorded behavior checklists, student attitude and interest surveys, and student journals. The behavior checklists were monitored by the researcher in addition to the instruction at Sites A and B. The researcher's assistant teacher monitored the behavior checklists while the researcher instructed at Site C. The methods used in the intervention were integrating cooperative learning into the existing curriculum, direct instruction of social skills, and analyzing character development through literature.

The attitude survey was administered at the end of nine weeks to compare the results to the beginning of the year. We altered the graphic organizers to add more variety in the lessons. At the different sites, each teacher integrated these themes into their own existing curriculum whenever possible.

The intervention consisted of 12 weeks of various activities and lessons that were part of the project objectives. These skills were basic manners, listening, complimenting versus cut-downs, treating others with respect, taking responsibility for their own behavior, and anger management.

The first two weeks were an introduction of basic manners to the students. An initial discussion of appropriate manners as followed by a webbing activity. Modeling and role-playing were other activities in which the students were involved. The books on manners were read and discussed. A video of manners was shown and a think/pair/share was used to assess student understanding.

Weeks three and four were spent on teaching the students listening skills. The unit began with a T-chart of what listening looks like and sounds like. The students also role played a non-listening activity. Students recorded how they felt to be ignored in their student journals. The next activity, Draw This, focused on attentive listening skills.

During weeks five and six, activities were planned to promote awareness of student compliments versus cut-downs. The week began with the I Am Lovable And Capable (IALAC) activity. Students then formed small groups to generate ideas and ways to increase someone's IALAC. Next, a compliment tree was formed to catch students complimenting each other. Finally, students wrote in their journals about a time when they felt bad because someone cut them down or when they cut someone else down. At the end of each day, the class shared three positive experiences that occurred during the day.

During weeks seven and eight, students were involved in activities that taught them about respect. The week began with a reading of a poem about the early learning of respect. Students filled out an agree/disagree chart on respect. Three books that directly and indirectly taught about respect were read and discussed. A second step lesson on accepting differences and treating all people the same was used. This resulted in a student generated classroom code of rights and responsibilities.

Weeks nine and ten were spent on activities that promoted student responsibility. A venn-diagram was used to compare and contrast two characters and their responsibilities. The skill steps of taking responsibility were taught to the students. Classroom jobs were created for students to demonstrate responsibility.

Weeks eleven and twelve focused on alternative ways for students to handle their anger. The week began with a review of the conflict management lessons. Relaxation tapes and techniques were then introduced to the students. Students generated strategies to control their anger. Finally, students journaled about various situations in which they had encountered good and bad anger management.

The forms of assessment included behavior checklists, student journals, and student attitude surveys. Once a week specific behaviors were monitored by the teacher or a teacher's aide using a checklist. The behaviors that were monitored were talking with others during instruction, shouting out without raising hand, out of seat without permission, playing with objects, inappropriate

language, making fun of others, inappropriate gestures, physical contact, threatening or intimidation, and negative attitude or gestures. Students corresponded in their journals once a week during the 12 weeks. Students were given various prompts reflecting the different weekly social skill themes and changes in the behavior of the classroom. Every student that attended school on that particular day was responsible for completing and handing in each journal entry. The student attitude surveys were given at the beginning and the end of the 12 weeks to assess if the lessons had any impact on their attitude.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

The data collected from the behavior checklists, student journals, and student attitude surveys were compiled by site, as well as, collectively. The data reflects the behavior checklist weekly tallies of inappropriate behavior. Sites A and B were monitored by the instructor, while Site C was monitored by a teacher assistant. One tally was given each time that particular behavior was displayed by a student. The raw data from the behavior checklists for each site is listed in Appendix F.

Behavior Checklist

At Site A, the data indicated that the first two weeks of the intervention showed a high frequency of talking during instruction, out of seat, shouting out and negative attitude. The pattern throughout the intervention was a consistent increase and decrease of these behaviors. Inappropriate language, making fun of others, and physical contact occurred at a minimal frequency throughout all of

the intervention. Playing in desks, inappropriate gestures and threatening or intimidation were nearly nonexistent at this site.

At Site B, the data indicated that the first four weeks of the intervention showed a high frequency of talking during instruction, shouting out, and out of seat. During the first four weeks, the behavior occurred frequently and then began to stabilize over the next seven weeks. In the final week, the occurrences of the behavior increased to the level of the first four weeks. Inappropriate language, making fun of others, physical contact and negative attitude occurred at a minimal frequency throughout all of the intervention. Playing in desks, inappropriate gestures and threatening or intimidation were nearly nonexistent at this site.

At Site C, the data indicated that the first five weeks of the intervention showed a high frequency of talking during instruction, shouting out, and playing in desk. During the first five weeks, the behavior occurred frequently and then stabilized throughout the remainder of the intervention. Negative attitude and out of seat occurred at a minimal frequency throughout all of the intervention. Inappropriate language, inappropriate gestures, physical contact, making fun of others and threatening or intimidation were nearly nonexistent at this site.

At all of the sites, the common inappropriate behaviors were talking with others during instruction and shouting out. These two areas showed a high occurrence of weekly tally marks. On the contrary, the areas of inappropriate gestures, inappropriate language, and threatening or intimidation were almost nonexistent at all three of the sites. At all of the sites, the pattern of the

behaviors was similar. The pattern showed that the behavior occurrences were frequent at the beginning of the intervention. During the core of the intervention, there was an initial decrease in the behavior. Then, the frequency of the behavior remained stable for the remainder of the intervention, except for the final two weeks of the intervention. The final two weeks showed an increase in the behaviors. The data indicated that the students behavior was not a reflection of their attitude.

Student Attitude Survey

All of the students were given the same attitude survey as at the beginning of the intervention. After the surveys were administered, the data was collected to see if there was a change in the student's attitude at the end of the intervention. The results are in Table 4.

Table 4

Student Attitude Survey

	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Never
School				
Important for me to do well	83%	13%	3%	1%
I work hard to make good choices	50%	46%	4%	0%
I like attending this school	72%	24%	2%	2%

Table 4 (continued)

	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Never
Academics				
I pay attention to the teacher	40%	46%	11%	3%
I participate in class discussions	49%	48%	3%	0%
The work is interesting	21%	42%	35%	2%
Parents				
Willing to help me with my homework	74%	17%	9%	0%
Expect good work	76%	20%	2%	2%
Interested in my school work	60%	21%	18%	1%
Can ask them for help	73%	13%	11%	3%
Behavior				
Well behaved classmates	4%	50%	43%	3%
Time is wasted for behavior	1%	20%	69%	10%
Students are well behaved	5%	44%	51%	0%
Rules				
Rules are fair	70%	21%	7%	2%
Consequences are fair	61%	34%	5%	0%
Environment				
My classmates treat me respectfully	26%	48%	18%	8%
I treat my classmates respectfully	54%	40%	4%	2%

There was a significant increase in the student's attitude toward the environment of the classroom. There was no significant change in the student's attitude toward school, academic performance, parental involvement, and behavior. The amount of students that felt their classmates treated them respectfully increased, as well as, the amount of students that felt they treated others respectfully increased. The greatest area of improvement was their attitude towards classroom rules. The majority of the students felt the rules were fair and the consequences were fair also. In addition to their attitudes toward school, behavior was evaluated using the behavior journals.

Behavior Journals

Students expressed that they were able to interact with one another with less conflict. In general, the students felt they treated each other with more respect and kindness. The students expressed more empathy toward each other by writing from another perspective. The students stated that the behavior in the classroom had improved, yet several students commented that conflicts still occurred on the playground or during lunch time. The researchers analyzed the behavior checklists, student attitude surveys, and student behavior journals to form many conclusions.

Conclusions and Recommendations

After implementing this intervention, the researchers have formed several conclusions. These conclusions were formulated based upon each individual site using the behavior checklists, student attitude surveys, and student journals.

Behavior Checklists

According to the data collected at Site A, the behavior checklists appeared to have no correlation to the particular lesson being taught that week. The behavior tallies do not seem to follow any particular pattern. However, the behavior appears to be influenced by many outside environmental factors. During week two, the inappropriate behavior tallies were high which also correlated with a substitute teacher present four out of the five days. Week seven had low inappropriate behavior tallies which also corresponded to parent/teacher conferences and report card distribution. Week eight had a low incidence of inappropriate behaviors which coincided with the announcement of an indictment in a fellow classmate's death. Week eleven also had low inappropriate behavior tallies which coincided with the death of the student's fifth grade teacher. Weeks ten and twelve had high inappropriate behavior tallies which preceded the upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas breaks.

According to the data collected at Site B, the behavior checklists appeared to have no correlation to the particular lesson being taught that week. The behavior tallies do not seem to follow any particular pattern. However, the behavior could have been influenced by many outside environmental factors. Week seven had low inappropriate behavior tallies which corresponded with parent/teacher conferences and report card distribution. Week eight had a low incidence of inappropriate behaviors which followed a shortened week due to a holiday. Weeks ten, eleven, and twelve had high inappropriate behavior tallies which preceded the upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas breaks.

According to the data collected at Site C, the behavior checklists appeared to have no correlation to the particular lesson being taught that week. The inappropriate behavior tallies do not appear to follow any particular pattern. However, the behavior seems to be influenced by many outside environmental factors. During week four, the inappropriate behavior tallies increased which corresponded with a substitute teacher present three out of the five days. During week five, the behavior tallies increased at the same time a new student teacher was added to the classroom. Week seven had low behavior tallies which coincided to parent/teacher conferences and report card distribution. Week eight had a high incidence of inappropriate behaviors which followed a shortened week. Week nine had increased behavior tallies which correlated with an assembly on the day the tallies were recorded. Week twelve had high inappropriate behavior tallies which preceded the upcoming Christmas break.

Many of the weeks in which the behavior tallies increased or decreased corresponded with outside environmental factors that varied from the student's normal routine. Some of these factors were also reflected in the student attitude surveys.

Student Attitude Survey

According to the post attitude survey given at the end of the intervention, the researchers have come to the following conclusions. The first conclusion is that the lessons of the intervention had an impact on the tone of the classroom environment. Several of the lessons focused on basic manners and how to treat others. This increased the self-awareness of the student's own behavior and the

effect it has on other people. The second conclusion is based on the greatest area of improvement of student attitude toward classroom rules. This is due to the fact that students were involved in making the classroom rules and the consequences for those rules. The final conclusion is based on the fact that the students opinion of classroom behavior remained nearly constant. This is attributed to an insignificant amount of change in the classroom behavior. Many of the students attitudes were reflected in the student behavior journals.

Behavior Journals

The behavior journals revealed more insight regarding how the students really felt about the classroom environment and their behavior. The students felt that they were being treated with respect and kindness. This is due to the social skill lessons which involved discussions, role playing activities, and cooperative group work in which the students participated. The student expression of empathy is derived from the activities in which the student analyzed various literary characters. Lastly, the students observation of conflict during lunch and on the playground is evidence of the lack of transfer outside the classroom environment.

After implementing this intervention, our recommendations for the teacher lessons are as follows. The lessons of the action plan engaged the students in meaningful and valuable activities. They promoted a more cooperative environment and positive attitude. The lessons in the action plan were successful; as a result, no changes are necessary.

The researchers believe that outside environmental factors played a major role regarding the behavior of the students. The researchers were able to control the classroom environment but did not have much influence on behavior in the lunchroom or the playground. Therefore, it is believed that the intervention would be most successful if it was implemented school wide. To help control the environmental factors and improve the effectiveness of the intervention, the school staff, parents and community would need to work together to help the child.

Overall, the topic of direct instruction of social skills and improving student behavior is subjective upon the individual implementing the action plan and evaluating its effectiveness. The process of documenting inappropriate behavior is challenging because each individual's opinion of appropriate behavior varies. Due to the several variables that effect human behavior, it is difficult to assess the accurate effectiveness of the intervention.

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APPENDIX A

BEHAVIOR CHECKLIST

Date_____

DAILY SCHEDULE	Talking with others during instruction	Shouting out without raising hand	Out of seat without permission	Playing in desk or with objects	Inappropriate language	Making fun of others or cutting them down	Inappropriate gestures	Physical contact	Threatening or intimidation	Negative attitude or gestures	Other
Total Behaviors observed											

Comments:

APPENDIX B

STUDENT BEHAVIOR JOURNAL

I learned that you shouldn't judge someone by how they look.

I remember one time when I was about 7, and I was playing on my jungle gym with my friend. Then a older boy came and started making fun of me and how I looked. It wasn't because you shouldn't be mean to someone because you don't like how they look.

I feel that I have matured since the begning of the year. Because I never had my homework in but now I do turn my homework in. I am now trying to get it to my class on time I am improving on that. The thing that I am really trying to improve is not talk when other are talking I relized it's not hard and it's pretty rude.

I think we have improved over the year. We have improved in talking but we got

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APPENDIX C

STUDENT ATTITUDE SURVEY

Directions Circle the answer you feel best describes your opinion.

1. It is important for me to do well in school.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

2. My parents expect me to do good work in school.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

3. I work hard to make good choices in school.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

4. I pay attention to my teacher in the classroom.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

5. The class work is interesting to me.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

6. The students in my classroom are well-behaved.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

7. Time is wasted in my classroom because of disruptive behavior.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

8. The rules in my classroom are _____ fair.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

9. The consequences for broken rules in my classroom are _____ fair.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

10. I feel safe and secure in my classroom.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

11. I feel safe and secure in my school.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

12. I feel comfortable participating in class discussions.

Always Mostly Sometimes Never

13. My classmates treat me with respect.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

14. I treat my classmates with respect.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

15. When I have a problem or need help, I feel comfortable asking a classmate for help.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

16. When I have a problem or need help, I feel comfortable asking my teacher for help.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

17. When I have a problem or need help, I feel comfortable asking my parents for help.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

18. My parents are willing to help me with my homework.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

19. My parents are interested in what I am doing in school.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

20. I am happy that I attend this school.
Always Mostly Sometimes Never

APPENDIX D

STUDENT INTEREST SURVEY

Student Interest Survey

1 Is anyone at home when you come home from school?
____ yes ____ no

2 Do you attend or have you ever attended the S A F E program?
____ yes ____no

3 Do you have a set time to do homework at your house?
____ yes ____no

4 Do you eat breakfast each morning?
____ yes ____ no

5 Does your family usually eat at least one meal together a day?
____ yes ____ no

6 Do you have chores to do at home?
____ yes ____ no

7 If yes, how many chores do you do a week?
____ 1 ____ 2 ____ 3 ____4 _____ 5 or more

8 Are there consequences if you choose not to do your chores?
____ yes ____ no

9 What is your bedtime on a school night?
____ 8 00 p m ____ 8 30 p m ____9 00 p m ____9 30 p m ____ after 9 30 p m

10 How many hours of television do you watch per day?
____less than 1hour ____ 1 hour ____ 2 hours ____ 3 hours ____4 or more hours

11 Check any of the following that you watch regularly (At least once a week)

____ Discovery Channel	____ Home Improvement	____Fresh Prince
____ Beavis and Butthead	____ The Simpsons	____Friends
____ News	____NYPD Blues	____ 90210
____ Full House	____ER	____ C O P S

12 Do you have cable television?
____ yes ____ no

13 If yes, check any of the following that you watch

____ ESPN ____ HBO ____Showtime
____ Pay Per View ____ TMC (The Movie Channel) ____ Lifetime
USA

14 Do you see "PG-13" or "R" rated movies with a parent or other adult?

____ yes ____ no

APPENDIX E

SUGGESTED CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Suggested Children's Literature to help teach social skills

- Don't Hurt Laurie by Willo Roberts
- Jason's Story by Deborah Anderson and Martha Finne
- Like the Lion's Tooth by Marjorie Kellogg
- The Lottery Rose by Irene Hunt
- The Pinballs by Betsy Byars
- The War on Villa Street by Harry Mazer
- Alexander & the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Virost
- Don't Pop Your Cork on Mondays by Adolph Moser
- I Was So Mad by Mercer Mayer
- The Hating Book by Charlotte Zolotow
- Mean Melissa by Michelle Price
- Big Al by Andrew Clements
- The Littlest Angel by Charles Tazewell
- The Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister
- Tacky the Penguin by Helen Lester
- We're Different, We're the Same by Bobbi Kates
- Swimmy by Leo Lionni
- Pink and Say by Patricia Polacco
- People by Peter Spier

APPENDIX F

BEHAVIOR CHECKLIST RAW DATE BY SITE

Weekly Behavior Tallies

Site A

Lesson Implemented	Week of Intervention	Talking with others during instruction	Shouting out without raising hand	Out of seat without permission	Playing in desk or with objects	Inappropriate language	Making fun of others/ cutting them down	Inappropriate gestures	Physical contact	Threatening or intimidation	Negative attitude or gestures
Basic Manners	Week 1	12	6	11	0	2	1	0	0	0	27
Basic Manners	Week 2	40	6	5	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Listening	Week 3	11	5	3	0	1	6	0	0	0	0
Listening	Week 4	12	6	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
Complimenting	Week 5	39	6	9	0	0	4	0	3	0	5
Complimenting	Week 6	20	4	5	0	3	5	0	0	0	7
Respect	Week 7	7	3	4	0	4	0	2	1	0	13
Respect	Week 8	13	2	5	0	1	3	2	1	0	6
Responsibility	Week 9	22	1	1	0	6	10	1	5	0	17
Responsibility	Week 10	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Anger Management	Week 11	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Anger Management	Week 12	42	3	18	0	2	21	0	1	1	12

Comments:

Weekly Behavior Tallies

Site B

Lesson Implemented	Week of Intervention	Talking with others during instruction	Shouting out without raising hand	Out of seat without permission	Playing in desk or with objects	Inappropriate language	Making fun of others/ cutting them down	Inappropriate gestures	Physical contact	Threatening or intimidation	Negative attitude or gestures
Basic Manners	Week 1	24	50	22	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
Basic Manners	Week 2	22	12	30	1	7	8	8	0	0	2
Listening	Week 3	25	21	19	0	0	0	0	1	3	5
Listening	Week 4	19	15	24	0	2	4	0	3	2	4
Complimenting	Week 5	18	20	10	0	0	8	0	0	0	5
Complimenting	Week 6	25	10	16	0	0	2	0	3	0	0
Respect	Week 7	16	9	13	0	0	4	0	2	0	0
Respect	Week 8	19	11	15	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
Responsibility	Week 9	27	21	13	0	1	3	0	4	0	0
Responsibility	Week 10	20	17	18	0	2	6	0	2	1	1
Anger Management	Week 11	21	24	16	0	1	6	0	1	0	0
Anger Management	Week 12	30	42	25	0	3	6	0	2	3	2

Comments:

Weekly Behavior Tallies

Site C

Lesson Implemented	Week of Intervention	Talking with others during instruction	Shouting out without raising hand	Out of seat without permission	Playing in desk or with objects	Inappropriate language	Making fun of others/ cutting them down	Inappropriate gestures	Physical contact	Threatening or intimidation	Negative attitude or gestures
Basic Manners	Week 1	20	87	4	24	0	0	0	0	0	13
Basic Manners	Week 2	39	89	14	17	0	2	0	0	0	26
Listening	Week 3	35	62	9	14	1	0	0	0	0	15
Listening	Week 4	20	99	23	18	0	0	0	0	0	2
Complimenting	Week 5	15	72	20	12	0	2	0	0	0	9
Complimenting	Week 6	16	39	2	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respect	Week 7	12	21	8	9	0	0	0	1	0	3
Respect	Week 8	16	38	2	11	0	0	0	0	0	1
Responsibility	Week 9	16	52	9	5	0	0	0	3	0	3
Responsibility	Week 10	15	22	7	7	5	0	0	0	0	0
Anger Management	Week 11	14	25	8	6	4	0	0	2	0	7
Anger Management	Week 12	16	30	10	15	6	0	0	1	0	9

Comments:

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